

The Meaning of the  
U. S. Elections.

It seems to be pretty generally conceded by the more candid and independent observers in the United States that whatever may be the correct interpretation of the result of the recent elections in that country, it cannot be successfully claimed as a decisive triumph either for the Republican party or for the principle of protection. An analysis of the returns shows that in a good many cases, at least, the victory of the Republicans was due simply to the fact that thousands of the Democrats did not go to the polls. In New Jersey, for instance, while there was an increase of less than three thousand in the Republican vote over that of 1892, there was a falling off of nearly forty-two thousand in the Democratic vote. In this respect the great change was brought about by causes very similar to those which gave the Democrats their innings at the general elections two years ago. In that case, disgusted Republicans, in the present, disgusted Democrats, stayed at home. Moreover, in many constituencies the majorities were so small in the late election that the change of a few votes, or the return to their allegiance of a few of the disaffected, would change the result in a future contest. Probably the most encouraging feature of the situation is, as *The Outlook* maintains, the evidence afforded of a great increase of independence—not so much an increase in the number of non-partisans, as in the independence of party men, the men who insist that political principles, pledges, and integrity are of greater moment than political success, and who decline to follow their party, when it leads in a direction whither they cannot in honor, honesty, and sound judgment follow. This is, perhaps, even better than an increase in the number of "Mugwumps" simply, because it brings a pressure to bear upon party leaders which a comparatively small number of independents cannot exert.

Steadily, if slowly, the Civil-Service reform

Civil Service Reform. is making headway in the United States.

By executive order President Cleveland has recently brought a considerable number of offices in the Customs and Post Office Departments under the operation of the rules administered by the Civil Service Commission. With these additions it is probable that these rules now govern and protect from the politicians not very much less than one-half of the whole one hundred and ten thousand employees who constitute the Civil Service. According to the *Morning Post*, when the reform system was first put into operation in 1883, only about fourteen thousand of the whole number of employees were brought under its rules. This great reform, taken in connection with other movements which we have been glad to chronicle from time to time, afford good ground for hoping that political principles and methods are on the up-grade in the great republic. On the other hand it is stated with apparent truthfulness that the mode in which the recent elections were carried on in many localities, especially in the South, surpasses in bold and gross corruption anything which has heretofore taken place in the national history. To quote a single instance. In one district in Georgia the total vote polled was, according to the *Atlanta Constitution*, 15,851, though the population of the whole district, according to the census, is only 45,000, and the number of male citizens over twenty-one years of age, only 11,000! But, even in regard to this, one hopeful circumstance is reported. There is, it is said, a great and unwonted cry in the South for electoral reform. It is scarcely uncharitable to suppose that this is because white voters as well as black have now been defrauded of their franchise. Even so, only good can come from exposure and agitation for reform.

## Dr. McCosh.

THE death of Dr. McCosh has removed a man who was not indeed a great scholar, or a great philosopher, or a great literary man, yet one who did very useful work as a theologian, as a thinker and writer, and as an administrator. Dr. McCosh belonged to the class of common sense British philosophers who make no great pretensions to originality, or even to profundity; but whose merit it is to take their stand on *terra firma*, to be very chary of introducing outlandish phraseology, and to steer a middle way between the dogmatist who walks the "high *priori* road" from end to end, and the mere empiricist who professes to derive all his knowledge from the senses.

Two things may be noted of Dr. McCosh's philosophical work, namely, that he was a loyal son of the Scottish school, in which he was born, without being its servile adherent and that there was an unusual measure of consistency in his philosophical contributions from beginning to end; and this holds true alike of his theology and his philosophy which were intimately related. The first considerable work by which his reputation was established on a firm basis was his "Method of the Divine Government, Physical and Moral," a book which was first published when he was a minister at Breechin, which was revised in its fourth edition while he was a professor at Belfast, and which was subjected to a final revision in its eighth edition, which was published while he was President of the College of New Jersey, at Princeton. This was his last post, which he resigned a few years ago, being succeeded by Dr. Patton.

The characteristics of this very considerable work are calmness, sobriety, comprehensiveness and judiciousness. The author had learnt the inductive method at the feet of Dr. Chalmers and uses it as a loyal disciple of the Scottish school should, with a constant recognition of the principles of common sense. In this latter respect, Dr. McCosh was a little less profuse than Dr. Reid had been, and was contented to set up business with less stock in trade of the nature of primary intuitions. The book was too large to suit modern notions of essay writing and reading; but the fact that it has come to an eighth edition shows that it has had many readers. Certain statements were supposed to be open to objection, and were criticised from various points of view. Instead of increasing the size of his book, he dealt with some of those subjects in separate treatises, one on the "Intuitions of the Mind Inductively Investigated," another on "Typical Forms and Special Ends in Creation."

Later on (1870) he put forth a treatise on "Formal Logic," under the title of "Laws of Discursive Thought," a very thoughtful contribution to the subject, which has not perhaps obtained the attention to which it was entitled from the fact of its not being quite suited to be a text-book. In 1875 he published his "Scottish Philosophy—Biographical, Expository, Critical," in which he gives an account of the preparations for the work of the school in Shaftesbury and others, and carrying the history along from Hutcheson, its founder, to Hamilton, its latest and most learned representative. This is a most thorough piece of work. It is probable that the interest in the "Common Sense Philosophy" has so far decreased that few will care to go so thoroughly into the subject, but Professor Seth, who now occupies the chair of Hamilton and Fraser, seems not inclined to allow that the Scottish philosophers contributed nothing to the modern movement in philosophy. In 1880, Dr. McCosh published a very interesting treatise on the "Emotions." Among other publications is an "Examination of Mr. J. S. Mill's Philosophy," and a treatise on "Christianity and Positivism."

Among the most interesting of Dr. McCosh's contribu-